

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

**Telecommunications Division  
Carrier Branch**

**RESOLUTION T-16829**

**R E S O L U T I O N**

**Resolution T-16829. Verizon California Inc. (U-1002-C) Requests Authority its Revise Its Schedule Cal. P.U.C. Nos. E-4 and K-5, To Withdraw Conference Connection Service Due To The Equipment Vendor Withdrawing Support For Parts, Labor, And Technical Back Up For Repair And Maintenance Of The Equipment Needed To Provide This Service.**

**By Advice Letter No. 10774 - Filed February 23, 2004.**

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**Summary**

This Executive Director Action Resolution authorizes Verizon California Inc. (Verizon) to revise its Schedule Cal. P.U.C. Nos. E-4 and K-5, to withdraw Conference Connection Service due to Verizon's equipment vendor Voyant withdrawing support for parts, labor, and technical back up for repair and maintenance of the equipment needed to provide this service.

**Background**

By Advice Letter (AL) No. 10774, filed February 23, 2004, Verizon requests authority to withdraw its Conference Connection Service.

In its advice letter Verizon states that Conference Connection Service, a Category II service, is a reservation-based conferencing service that allows 3 or more parties to communicate by telephone interconnection. The conference host establishes a conference by reserving a time and quantity of ports with an Operator who creates a reservation in the conferencing system. The host and participants access the conference at the appointed time using the access number provided by the Operator when the reservation was established. Operator assistance services are available to notify participants, meet and greet participants and escort them into the "conference" room and perform various other services as ordered by the host. The person who established the conference is billed according to the services requested.

Verizon' Conference Connection Service is provided by equipment vendor Voyant, under its Allegro product line and related support service.

Verizon states that it has been notified that Voyant will withdraw its support for parts, labor and technical back up for repair and maintenance of the equipment needed to provide its Conference Connection Service. Voyant cites changing market conditions for audio conferencing service, as the reason for withdraw of its service support.

Verizon maintains that Voyant initially agreed to only support existing contracts until May 2002. Subsequently, Voyant has entered into additional agreements with Verizon in which it agreed to continue to maintain the Conference Connection Service.

With the contract effective January 1, 2004, Verizon states that Voyant agreed to provide it with telephone support only until June 2004. Without a service and parts agreement with Voyant, Verizon states it will not be able to maintain the equipment in working condition. In response to a data request from the Telecommunications Division (TD), Verizon provided an undated letter from Voyant, in which Voyant states that, "After June 30, 2004 maintenance and support including (Time & Material support) for the Allegro equipment will not be available."

Verizon reports that it has had approximately 750 customers use this service within the past year on a per call basis. Verizon will notify these customers of the withdrawal of Conference Connection Service and will also provide these customers with information to aid them in finding an alternative service such as Verizon's "Reservation-Less Conferencing." Verizon has responded to a data request and provided a copy of the notification letter it plans to send to its customers as well as a spreadsheet containing 736 customer names and addresses.

Verizon requests that the effective date of its withdrawal request be established by Executive Director Resolution.

### **Notice/Protests**

Verizon says that copies of the Advice Letter were mailed to interested utilities and/or parties. Notice of AL No. 10774 was published in the Commission Daily Calendar of February 27, 2004. No protests to this Advice Letter have been received.

### **Discussion**

Resolution No. T-9598, dated March 22, 1977, authorizes the Executive Director to grant requests for freezing or limiting communications utility tariff offerings of equipment that has been manufacturer discontinued.

Additional relevant Commission Rules are embedded in Verizon's General Exchange Tariff; Section 3; Rules & Regulations; Definitions, which states:

"Frozen/ Grandfathered Service/ Service Limited to Existing Customers – The term "frozen/grandfathered service" applies to an obsolete and/or outdated service the Utility no longer wishes to provide. The freezing/grandfathering of a service is the Utilities method of managing a tariff for this service prior to ultimately discontinuing the service, or change existing tariff regulations without discontinuing certain rights privileges or conditions of the service to existing customers."

"Existing Customers – Customers or subscribers to a service at a specific point of time. Often used in reference to those customers of record at the time that a service is classified as frozen, grandfathered or limited to existing customers."

TD has reviewed and analyzed the tariff changes requested by Verizon in Advice Letter No. 10774, as well as the notification letter Verizon plans to send to its Conference Connection customers. TD finds that Verizon's request to withdraw this service is just and reasonable and complies with Commission Resolution No. T-9598 and Commission rules embedded in Verizon's tariff rules cited above. TD also finds Verizon's notice to its customer acceptable as it provides an alternative conferencing service. TD recommends the notice be sent at least 30-days prior to the cancellation of the service. Therefore, Verizon's request for authority to revise Schedule Cal. P.U.C. Nos. E-4 and K-5, to withdraw Conference Connection Service, effective on June 30, 2004, is just and reasonable.

Commission approval of TD's recommendations is based on the specifics of this Advice Letter and its associated tariff sheets, and does not establish a precedent for the contents of future filings or for Commission approval of similar requests.

### **Findings**

1. Verizon requests authority to withdraw its Conference Connection Service as a tariff offering, effective June 30, 2004.
2. Verizon states that Voyant, the vendor for this service, will no longer provide support for parts, labor and technical back up for repair and maintenance of the equipment needed to provide this service after June 30, 2004.
3. In response to a data request Verizon has provided an undated letter from Voyant, in which it states that, "After June 30, 2004 maintenance and support including (Time & Material support) for the Allegro equipment will not be available."
4. Verizon states there are approximately 750 customers who have used its Conference Connection Service during the past year.

5. Verizon states that Customer Notification Letters will be mailed to each of these approximately 750 customers and that the customers will be advised of an alternative conferencing service such as Verizon's "Reservation-Less Conferencing."

6. Verizon has responded to a TD data request and provided a copy of the notification letter it plans to send to its customers as well as a spreadsheet containing the names and addresses of the 736 customers who have used Conference Connection Service during the past year.

7. The Commission approves all of TD's foregoing recommendations.

**THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that:**

1. Verizon is granted authority to revise its Schedule Cal. P.U.C. Nos. E-4 and K-5, to withdraw Conference Connection Service tariffed offerings contained in Verizon California Inc.'s Advice Letter No. 10670 effective on June 30, 2004.

2. Advice Letter No. 10774 of Verizon and accompanying tariff sheets shall be marked to show that they were authorized by California Public Utilities Commission Resolution No. T-16829 and its effective date of June 30, 2004.

3. Verizon shall mail Customer Notification Letters to customers who have used Conference Connection Service, no later than 30-days prior to June 30, 2004, informing them that Conference Connection services will be discontinued effective June 30, 2004.

4. Verizon shall provide a copy of the customer notification letter, prior to mailing, to TD Director Jack Leutza and TD Analyst Richard Maniscalco.

5. Conference Connection Service shall be withdrawn effective June 30, 2004.

This Resolution is effective today.

I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted by Executive Action Resolution on April 8, 2004.

/s/ WESLEY FRANKLIN for

WILLIAM AHERN  
Executive Director